

## **Building Partnerships**

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### **Why we Partner...**

- We can learn from each other
- We can use each others resources
- We can create better plans together
- We can take risks together
- We can help each other
- We can make each other laugh
- We can build on each others strengths
- We can change things for the better
- We can make a difference

### **Plan and Develop A Shared Vision**

- Develop a Vision statement early on - you can't get there if you don't know where you are going.
- What do you want it to look like if it looks like you want it to?
- Make sure to identify shared core values and principles of the partners.
- Incorporate community values into the mission.
- Make sure people are on the same page (Why are we here?).
- Discuss the need for partnership (What's in it for me and you?).
- Consider sub groups that help expand the partnership and vision.

## Building Trust

- Identify important goals to work on
- Identify common agreed upon outcomes
- Consider system vs. individual issues and how they impact each other
- Support each other to be the best he/she can be
- Develop “Rules of Engagement”
- Bond through commonalties
- Agree to disagree respectfully
- Watch the timing...Timing is everything
- Do your share of the work - invest in the process
- Show up...the people that are there make the decisions and form the relationships
- Share the power - we all have some -some more than others
- Appreciate what you bring to the partnership
- Build a safe place to take risks...There are no dumb questions
- Be an active participant instead of a passive participant
- Commit to developing relationships in the partnership
- Realize that change is a part of the growth process
- Network, supply information and offer to help
- Use strength based words and NO BLAMING
- Don't internalize everything that happens
- Reach consensus whenever possible - you know a lot but not everything
- Work within the partnership to try to solve and resolve problems
- Trust the process

- Develop atmosphere that “affirms and supports cultural, racial, and linguistic of the members and enhances their ability to function.”\*
- Be inclusive instead of exclusive
- Do quality timely work - meet deadlines
- Follow through with projects/responsibilities
- Commit time to the partnership - But don’t over commit

\*Family Support America, Principles of Family Support Practice

## Communication

Often talked about, seldom done, but a key to SUCCESS.

- ✓ Seek direct communication with your partners regularly
- ✓ Share information regularly
- ✓ Stay away from the “he said/she said”
- ✓ Address issues as soon as possible and appropriately
- ✓ Reevaluate relationships and think what could make them better and make them better
- ✓ Have a conflict resolution policy and procedure
- ✓ Let go of “jargon” and acronyms \*
- ✓ Learn to read body language - study people’s unspoken language
- ✓ Never assume...ASK
- ✓ Have humor, use humor, and insist on humor
- ✓ Establish a line of communication to the participants for instance: email list serves, develop mailing lists, web pages, phone trees

## Challenges

- Geography
- Capacity
- Information
- Resources
- Power needs
- Turf issues
- Communication styles

## Characteristics of Groups That Work

- Members trust each other and the group
- Goals are clear and are determined by the members
- Members feel they belong
- Willingness to hear new ideas
- Conflict is recognized and discussed with intent to resolve
- Members accept responsibility
- Communication is clear
- Members use each other as a resource and support
- Individual differences are respected
- Members define and understand ground rules

## True Collaboration

True collaboration means there is shared:

- \* Vision
- \* Information
- \* Resources
- \* Money

- \* Power
- \* Accountability

{ SHAPE \\* MERGEFORMAT }

In the end, “Relationships are all there is to reality.”\*

\* Federation of Families for Children’s Mental Health